

Monthly Update – June 2015

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

OVERVIEW

USAID-TAPP is increasing incomes for smallholder farmers, improving nutrition, and expanding markets through agricultural innovation and commercialization. The program is part of Feed the Future, the US government's global hunger and food security initiative to break the cycle of hunger and poverty in the developing world. Feed the Future is focusing on the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor (SAGCOT), a region the Tanzanian government has identified as the most conducive for agricultural growth. Working with our partners and the Government of Tanzania, USAID-TAPP is concentrating efforts on selected crops and regions to help transform the country's food security.

USAID-TAPP LAUNCHES SELLING POINTS TO STIMULATE OFSP AWARENESS

In June, USAID-TAPP launched three orange flesh sweet potato (OFSP) selling points in Arusha. More than 100 people attended the events, which were followed by OFSP cooking demonstrations by health and nutrition specialist Alice Mwambambale.

With two selling points identified and operational, USAID-TAPP distributed OFSP-branded umbrellas in local markets and supermarkets, which has helped to increase awareness. In the last three months, more than 139,180 OFSP vines (equivalent to 3.09 hectares under improved technology) have been distributed to farmers. USAID-TAPP partner organization Eco-Agri Consult reported a total sale of more than TZS 40 million (\$20,877) as a result of OFSP vines sales.

Volunteer and OFSP vendor Mariam Mohammed spoke about the benefits of the training at one of the selling point launch events in Kilombero market in Arusha. "It brought me many new ideas, such as the different ways of using OFSP in cooking and making juices," said Mohammed. "My children will now receive treats from this delicious and nutritious tuber."

Over the past three months, USAID-TAPP has had significant involvement with school programs, training and educating school children and their family members in OFSP production. A total of 312 students in eight schools from Babati were trained on creating OFSP vines net tunnels and field multiplication. Students were also given vines to plant in their homes.

Two additional OFSP-branded stalls will be given to the Tanzania Horticulture Association (TAHA) to be distributed to vendors to increase OFSP awareness around Arusha. More stalls will be constructed and displayed in other regions in the country. The distributed stalls and branded umbrellas will be used in local markets and supermarkets to increase awareness about the nutritious benefits of OFSP.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Participants learn the uses of orange flesh sweet potatoes at the launch of an OFSP selling point in Kilombero market in Arusha.

FARMER GROUP UTILIZES TECHNOLOGY IN HORTICULTURE PRODUCTION



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Bahati Malechela stands next to a new power tiller purchased from profits received from the sale of horticulture crops produced by Faraja farmers group in Idodi, Iringa.

The Faraja farmers group in Idodi, Iringa rural has increased production after receiving training in improved technologies from USAID-TAPP. The group expanded their production of tomatoes and watermelon from one to four acres of land under drip irrigation during two years of USAID-TAPP assistance.

The group produced more than 1,300 crates of tomatoes in their first production season under USAID-TAPP support on one acre of land. The sales motivated the group to expand their farm to four acres with profits obtained from the sale of tomatoes from their one acre plot. To help improve the lives of group members and ease farm operations, the group also purchased a power tiller worth TZS 6 million (\$3,000). The tiller will be used to transport inputs and produce in addition to making raised beds, shifting from traditional hand hoes.

“We have harvested more than 5,500 watermelons on one of the acres we purchased and generated an income of TZS 5.5 million (\$2,750),” said Bahati Malechela, chairman of Faraja farmers group. “We received this income after putting the knowledge we received into practice from the USAID-TAPP technicians on proper spacing, use of hybrid seeds, fertigation, and integrated pest management, and we are thrilled with the results.”

The group has sold their produce directly to buyers from Kariakoo market in Dar es Salaam, allowing them to cut out middlemen who often take advantage of smallholder farmers by lowering prices of horticulture crops. The group has brought high quality and healthy tomatoes to Kariakoo despite the chronic outbreak of the *tuta absoluta* in most areas, especially Iringa.

“Because this was a new, unfamiliar pest (*tuta absoluta*), most of the smallholder farmers have failed to control it,” said Malechela. “But thanks to USAID-TAPP technicians, we received integrated pest management trainings on controlling the pests and preventing them from returning.”

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

“Increased food security through enhanced productivity”

USAID-TAPP is a five-year program implemented by Fintrac Inc. to increase smallholder farmer incomes through enhanced productivity, crop diversification, and improved market access. Visit www.tanzania-agric.org for more information on upcoming activities and to receive copies of monthly bulletins and success stories.

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